

Message Text

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PAGE 01 YAOUND 02522 211314Z
ACTION SCS-06

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ISO-00 HA-05 L-03 H-01 CIAE-00
INR-10 NSAE-00 SSO-00 INRE-00 CA-01 PA-01 ICAE-00
NSCE-00 /038 W
-----072678 211319Z /15
O 211155Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 5557
INFO AMEMBASSY NDJAMENA IMMEDIATE

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: CDES (ERICKSON, MAYNARD AND ERICKSON, MIRIAM)
SUBJ: DEATHS OF MAYNARD AND MIRIAM ERICKSON

REF: (A) STATE 127822 (B) NDJAMENA 1957 (C) YAOUNDE 2520
(D) STATE 127592 (E) YAOUNDE 2500 (F) YAOUNDE 2478

1. EMBASSY HAS BEEN HANDICAPPED IN ATTEMPTING TO CONTACT GURC OFFICIALS DUE TO PREPARATIONS FOR AND FINALLY THE OCCURRENCE OF NATIONAL DAY ITSELF OF SATURDAY, MAY 20TH. WE WERE ONLY ABLE SPEAK TO ALL PARTIES WITH INTEREST IN MATTER AT PRESIDENTIAL RECEPTION EVENING OF 20TH. AMBASSADOR AND DCM SPOKE WITH AYISSI MVODO, MINISTER OF STATE FOR TERRITORIAL ADMINISTRATION, VICE MINISTER YANG, SAMUEL BGBWA THE GENERAL DELEGATE FOR NATIONAL SECURITY, LT. COL. OSMANOU DAOUDA, THE DIRECTOR OF THE PRESIDENT'S MILITARY CABINET (HE CONTROLS COMMUNICATIONS) AND DEPTY CHIEF OF PROTOCOL NKWAIN. ALL WERE GIVE COPIES OF DIP NOTE PREPARED ON 19TH ANNOUNCING CONSULAR VISIT TO YAGOUA. THEY ALL EXPRESSED REGRET AT SITUATION, CANDIDLY ADMITTED THEY HAD LITTLE OR NO INFORMATION AS TO WHAT HAD HAPPENED AND PROMISED THE COOPERATION OF THEIR RESPECTIVE ORGANIZATIONS IN ASSISTING THE EMBASSY TEAM BEING SENT BY CHARTER PLANE TOMORROW TO ASCERTAIN THE DETAILS. THEY SAID
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THEY WOULD NOTIFY THEIR YAGOUA REPS. AYISSI MVODO INITIATED CONVERSATION WITH AMBASSADOR BY SAYING HE WAS SORRY ABOUT THE NEWS OF THE MISSIONARIES. HE NOTED THAT THERE WAS RECENT BREAK-OUT OF 180 PRISONERS IN NEARBY CHAD AND THE GURC WAS FEARFUL THAT IT MAY HAVE BEEN ESCAPED PRISONERS WHO HAD COMMITTED THE DEED. SAMUEL NGBWA SAID THAT HE KNEW FOR SURE ONLY THAT ONE PERSON HAD BEEN KILLED WITH A KNIFE AND HE THOUGHT ROBBERY

WAS THE MOTIVE, BUT ADMITTED HIS INFORMATION WAS SKETCHY.
ALL CONCERNED SAID EFFECTIVENESS OF THEIR LIMITED COMMUNICATIONS
FACILITIES (NO TELEPHONES IN YAGOUA) WAS ADVERSELY AFFECTED
BY PREOCCUPATION THROUGHOUT COUNTRY WITH NATIONAL DAY CELEBRATIONS.

2. AYISSI MVODO AND NGBWA SAID THAT THEY WERE CONCERNED ABOUT
THE POSSIBLE DELETERIOUS EFFECT OF THE NEWS OF THE MURDERS ON
THE EXPATRIATE COMMUNITY IN GENERAL AND THE MISSIONARY COMMUNITY
IN PARTICULAR. WE INFERRED THAT IN A SENSE THEY WELCOMED OUR
INVESTIGATION, WHICH WE MADE CLEAR WAS AT THE BEHEST OF
WASHINGTON IN ORDER TO GAIN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS BEING RAISED
IN THE STATES, AND WAS NOT TO BE CONSTRUED AS COMPETING WITH ANY
LOCAL INVESTIGATIONS UNDERWAY. IN SHORT, WE FEEL THAT WE HAVE
PROCEEDED ABOUT AS RAPIDLY AS LOCAL SENSITIVITIES WOULD PERMIT,
GIVEN THE FACT THAT THEY HAD TO LEARN FOR THEMSELVES THAT
THEY COULD NOT ANSWER THE KINDS OF QUESTIONS THAT WERE BEING
RAISED.

3. THE EMBASSY HEARD YESTERDAY THAT NEWS OF THE MURDERS WAS
PRESENTED ON A MINNESOTA TELEVISION STATION. TRUST DEPARTMENT
MONITORING PUBLIC RELATIONS ASPECT THIS TRAGIC EPISODE. IN
THIS CONNECTION, BELIEVE RECORD SHOULD SHOW THAT WE ARRANGED
MONDAY'S CHARTER, SUBJECT TO CONFIRMATION, BEFORE RECEIPT
REFTEL D IN THE EVENT WE WERE UNABLE SECURE SUFFICIENT
INFORMATION FROM GURC SOURCES TO ANSWER INQUIRIES. THE LACK
OF RESPONSE AND REFTEL D PROVIDED US WITH SUFFICIENT ARGUMENTS
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TO JUSTIFY THE CHARTER AND ENLIST GURC SUPPORT OF OUR EFFORTS
TO LEARN WHAT HAPPENED.

4. ACTION REQUESTED: IT WOULD BE APPRECIATED IF THE DEPT WOULD
CONTACT REV. ROY ERICKSON, BROTHER AT (209) 224-8839,
MRS. MARGURITE SWANSON, DAUGHTER, AT (612) 729-3896 AND
MR. OVERGARD AND INQUIRE IF THERE ARE ANY MESSAGES THEY WISH
PASSED TO PEOPLE AT YAGOUA OR, IN ADDITION TO GENERAL INQUIRY
WE INTEND TO UNDERTAKE, IF THERE ARE ANY SPECIFIC QUESTIONS
THEY WANT ANSWERED. PLEASE SEND NIACT IMMEDIATE AS TAKE OFF TIME
IS 0700 GMT MAY 22. WE WILL ATTEMPT TO HAVE ANSWERS BY TUESDAY
MAY 23 COB.
SMYTHE

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Message Attributes

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